

OUR TOWN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

SEPTEMBER 2010



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Undergrounding Utilities



According to PG&E, between 1998 and 2002—on average—the Town had over 14 outages per year caused by overhead lines and less than two per year caused by underground lines.

As of 2003, the Town had 64 miles of overhead primary distribution and 22 miles of underground primary distribution. Waiting for PG&E to bury town utilities using funds dedicated by law for undergrounding would take over 1,000 years.



Palo Alto is close to completing their 40-year project to bury all existing overhead wires throughout their city.

All new housing projects in California are required to have underground utilities.

An estimated three million miles of electric wires dot the U.S. countryside, cluttering up views and residential communities. As a result, a growing movement across America is forcing those unsightly electric, cable, and phone wires to go underground. Not only has undergrounding had the effect of reopening beautiful natural vistas, but it has also helped boost property values.

Los Altos Hills — commanding the heights above Silicon Valley and the San Francisco Bay, providing an array of stunning views — is eagerly participating in this undergrounding movement.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.]



By now you may have noticed the lack of overhead wires at the Little League Fields at Purissima Park and along Byrne Preserve on Altamont Road. These wires were placed underground in an underground pilot project that was completed last year. Reducing the visual clutter has had the effect of highlighting the natural beauty of the hills rising up above the fields, promising similar benefits as ever more utility poles and wires are removed from view.

Here it is significant to note that costs for the project came in far below PG&E's estimates, which varied considerably but averaged around \$400 per linear foot.

A better total cost estimate for the Los Altos Hills undergrounding projects is approximately \$170 per linear foot — far below PGE's initial estimate of \$400 per foot.

Based on the results of the pilot project, a better total cost estimate for the Los Altos Hills undergrounding projects is approximately \$170 per linear foot. This includes burying electrical, cable, and phone lines.

Additionally, PG&E has indicated that all resident-funded undergrounding projects over 600 feet will qualify for a special rebate equal to the cost of a new overhead system. This will further lower the net cost to nearly \$100 per linear foot.

Finally, the Town's Undergrounding Utilities Committee recently completed a procedural guide to help residents form their own undergrounding districts and obtain attractive financing. The Town Council unanimously approved the procedure at its May 20, 2010 meeting.

One of the first neighborhood groups to pursue undergrounding consists of residents along the Anacapa Drive/Viscaino/La Cresta corridor. They have expressed an interest in forming a district to underground the unsafe and unsightly poles, and will soon host an informational meeting to outline the process.

Residents interested in undergrounding unsightly, unsafe, and unreliable wires, as well as improving their views and property values, should contact LAH City Clerk Karen Jost at 650-941-7222 to obtain a copy of the new guidelines.



TO LEARN MORE:

Visit the Los Altos Hills Public Works page on the Town's website:
www.losaltoshills.ca.gov.

Town of Los Altos Hills Summary Procedure for the Formation of Utility Undergrounding Districts

1. Talk to neighbors to gauge initial interest level, using a very rough cost estimate of \$40k per parcel.
2. Minimum district size is about 10 parcels. Bigger is better.
3. If over 50% of neighbors express interest, estimate the number of linear feet to be undergrounded by walking the distance along the wires.
4. Multiply linear feet by \$170 to get a better estimate of cost. Any large equipment on the poles (besides the normal transformers close to each house) will add to the cost.
5. Use this improved estimate and get neighbors to sign a petition expressing official interest. At this point you should have more than 75% participation.
6. Contact the LAH Public Works Department at 650-741-7222.



Cover: PG&E began the pilot project of undergrounding utilities along Purissima Road in front of Purissima Ball Park in 2008. Above and left: In the 2006 windstorm, a tree knocked down power lines on Altamont Road. Firefighters and PG&E crews were called in to deal with live wires that were sparking — a very dangerous condition that took the life of a firefighter in Los Gatos that same year. During the storm season, outages occur at least twice a week. The Altamont "wind tunnel" causes utility poles to sway dramatically in the wind.

FROM THE CITY MANAGER



The year 2010 marks the successful completion of a three-year capital improvement program that has resulted in the restoration of the Town's two major Parks and Recreation Facilities: Purissima Park and Westwind Community Barn. This year the Town will be turning its attention and resources to sanitary sewer system maintenance in addition to the annual Street Rehabilitation Project. The City Council has authorized the expenditure of \$472,000 for sewer repair projects and \$1.6 million for street repairs.

Below are two summary tables. The first table shows streets that are scheduled for pavement work this summer; the second shows the street locations of major sewer repair projects. Pipe bursting is a method of replacing underground pipelines without the need to dig a continuous trench.

For more information on the Town's street paving program or sanitary sewer repair projects, please contact Assistant Engineer John Chau at 650-947-2510.

Carl Cahill, City Manager

2010 Pavement Rehabilitation Project

| Street Name | From | To | Type of Work |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Beaver Lane | La Cresta Dr. | End of street | Remove & replace asphalt concrete (AC) curb |
| Berkshire Drive | West Loyola Dr. | West Loyola Dr. | 6" digouts & 2" AC overlay; repair storm drain pipes |
| Emerald Hill Lane | Prospect Ave. | End of street | 6" AC digouts |
| Foothill Lane | Elena Rd. | End of street | 12" digouts for tree roots; replace 2.5" AC |
| La Cresta Drive | Viscaino Rd. | End of street | Construct storm drain system; replace 2.5" AC |
| Natoma Road | Elena Rd. | Altamont Road | Replace 6" AC; install AC swale |
| Rolly Road | West Loyola Dr. | 10320 Rolly Rd. | Replace 2.5" AC |
| Sunhills Drive | West Loyola Dr. | 10451 Sunhills Dr. | Replace 2.5" AC |
| Taaffe Road | Elena Rd. | Taaffe Lane | Install 6" AC dike |
| West Loyola Drive | Ravensbury Ave. | Eastbrook Ave. | 6" digouts and 2" overlay |

2010 Sanitary Sewer Repair Project

| Location | Method of Repair | Quantity |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Becky Lane | Pipe Bursting | 265 linear feet |
| Becky Lane | Pipe Bursting | 159 l.f. |
| Golden Hill Court | Pipe Bursting | 196 l.f. |
| Golden Hill Court | Pipe Bursting | 105 l.f. |
| La Cresta Drive | Pipe Bursting | 557 l.f. |
| Shady Oak | Pipe Bursting | 688 l.f. |
| Via Cerro Gordo | Pipe Bursting | 312 l.f. |
| Viscaino Road | Pipe Bursting | 180 l.f. |

FROM THE PLANNING DIRECTOR

On July 15, 2010, the City Council adopted the Fast Track Guide for New Residences, an illustrated guide to the development philosophies behind the Town's General Plan and Ordinances. The document is provided for use by homeowners, architects, and builders in designing new residence projects that would qualify for Fast Track review.

The Fast Track Guide contains four design goals and 40 development guidelines. The guidelines represent design solutions that are desirable and compatible with the community. A checklist that accompanies the Fast Track Guide will be used to determine how closely a proposed new residence complies with the guidelines. The checklist works on a negative point system. Each development guideline has an established point value between 1 and 5 (1=recommended, 5=very important). Projects that do not comply with a particular guideline will receive the applicable points. A new residence that scores 14 points or less is eligible for a Fast Track hearing. A project that scores between 15 and 21 points may

be redesigned or forwarded to the Planning Commission. A project that scores 22 points or more must be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Since many of guidelines within the document represent sound design principles rather than quantifiable zoning standards, the Fast Track Guide and checklist will not be used by Town staff or the Planning Commission to approve or deny an application. The Guide will be used solely to determine a project's eligibility for the Fast Track process. The Fast Track Guide will become effective after the City Council amends Section 10-2.1305.1 of the Site Development Code (Fast Track Ordinance). Amendments to the Municipal Code are expected to be completed by October 2010. In the meantime, if you are interested in obtaining a copy of the Fast Track Guide, please email me at dpedro@losaltoshills.ca.gov or pick up a copy at the Town Hall permit counter.

Debbie Pedro, Planning Director



Town Finances Remain Healthy

The Town's 2010-11 fiscal condition remains steady, with revenues and expenditures relatively flat year-over-year amid an ongoing, robust capital improvement program.

The current fiscal year started on July 1, 2010, with an undesignated General Fund reserve of approximately \$3.41 million and an emergency contingency and operating contingency reserve of \$1.60 million. With 2010-11 operating revenues of \$5.97 million and expenditures of \$5.08 million, the year is forecasted to end with an operating surplus of \$0.89 million.

This surplus will be used to fund discretionary programs, which include operations and capital improvements for parks and recreation, streets, pathways, and storm drains.

The Town will roll out a robust \$3 million capital improvement program in 2010-11. Over half of the capital improvements will be invested in streets. The program, while funded through a variety of sources, will require \$0.18 million from undesignated General Fund reserves.

Property taxes, the Town's largest revenue source, are budgeted to be flat year-over-year. This reflects downward revisions to property tax reassessments as a result of slow growth in the real estate market, and the offsetting increase in assessed values realized when a property changes hands. (Homes assessed under Proposition 13 carry values significantly below current market levels.)

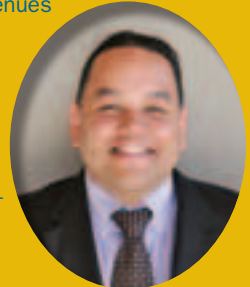
The Town's fiscally responsible salary and benefit policies have contained personnel costs. For example, the budget does not provide an across-the-board salary increase for the second year in a row. And unlike many other public agencies, the Town did not increase employee pensions in the past decade. In fact, in 2009-10, the Town paid off its \$0.64M unfunded pension liability.

What's more, this fall management will recommend the adoption of new salary and benefit policies to further control personnel costs. Included in the recommendations are changes to the salary schedule, reduced pensions for new employees, and a pension contingency reserve fund to offset unanticipated increases in the Town's pension costs.

The State's budget problems continue to represent the single-largest threat to the Town's fiscal condition. In the past, Sacramento has "raided" local government coffers to help balance the State budget. Outgoing Governor Schwarzenegger and the legislature appear to be far apart on core budgetary issues, which may result in the budget deficit becoming the next Governor's challenge.

These issues have important implications for Town residents. In addition to selecting the State's next Governor, voters will be asked to determine the State's ability to "raid" those local government revenue sources not already protected by previous ballot initiatives.

Nick Pegueros, Finance Director



November Election Around the Corner

Voting is easy. The Town of Los Altos Hills will be a designated drop-off point for vote-by-mail ballots for the November 2 Election. Any mail ballots issued from Santa Clara County can be deposited in the official ballot box located in the lobby of Town Hall. Vote-by-mail ballots will be mailed to registered voters starting on October 4. The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is October 26.

Ballots returned to Town Hall must be received by 5:00 pm on Election Day, November 2. Voters may also return their ballots to any polling place or the Registrar's Headquarters by 8:00 pm when the polls officially close.

Please contact City Clerk Karen Jost at 650-941-7222 with any questions regarding the vote-by-mail program or voter registration.



LAH VOTING BY THE NUMBERS

LAH Registered Voters 5,691

| Political Party Affiliation | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| American Independent | 76 |
| Decline To State | 1,460 |
| Democratic | 2,014 |
| Green | 21 |
| Libertarian | 26 |
| Natural Law | 1 |
| Peace And Freedom | 2 |
| Reform | 9 |
| Republican | 2,082 |

Source: Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters

The 2008 Presidential General Election, 11/4/08: Voting Method

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Absentee Issued but not Returned | 14 |
| Inactive Voter At Polling Place | 11 |
| Mail Ballot Issued but not Returned | 258 |
| Provisional ABS Not Surrendered | 35 |
| Provisional Voter | 26 |
| Provisional-Mail Ballot Voter | 18 |
| Voted at Polling Place | 777 |
| Voted by Absentee Ballot | 57 |
| Voted by Mail Ballot | 4,123 |



NEW CERT GRADUATES STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY'S DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



The Town of Los Altos Hills, in collaboration with the Los Altos Hills County Fire District and Santa Clara County Fire Department, graduated 31 new volunteer Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members on June 5, 2010.

New members received 20 hours of CERT training over four evening classes and a Saturday class that covered CERT organization, fire suppression, light search and rescue, first aid, and disaster psychology. The graduating class was sworn in as Disaster Service Workers at the June 17, 2010 City Council meeting. The Town and District have 121 CERT-trained volunteers ready to respond in the event of a disaster. The Town and District are proactively recruiting residents to enhance the Neighborhood Emergency Response Network. Residents wishing to become a CERT member may contact Mike Sanders at 650-922-1055. Residents pay \$90 for the training, but the Los Altos Hills County Fire District refunds the \$90 fee to graduating CERT members.

Los Altos Hills County Fire District/ Santa Clara County Fire Department
Fall Class Schedule 2010

Personal Emergency Preparedness Classes
September: Sat., 9/11, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm
October: Mon., 10/11, 6:00 - 9:30 pm
November: Mon., 11/8, 6:00 - 9:30 pm

Senior Personal Emergency Preparedness Classes
September: Sat., 9/18, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
October: Sat., 10/23, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
November: Mon. & Wed., 11/15 & 17, 4:00 - 6:00 pm both days

CPR Classes
September: Sat., 9/25, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
October: Sat., 10/16, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
November: Sat., 11/13, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Contact Michael Sanders, 650-922-1055 or mike.sanders@cnt.sccgov.org or www.lahcfd.org for class information



THE LADIES OF LIBERTY

Artist and true patriot Laurie Barna presents "The Liberty Ladies," 25 of a series of 100 paintings of the Statue of Liberty with different narratives expressing the nature and experience of liberty. The opening reception will be held at Town Hall on Sunday, September 12 from 2:00 – 5:00 pm. Linda Mankin, retired Foothill College professor, and her Les Sophisticats will provide live patriotic music. "All American" food will be featured at the reception. The exhibit will run from September 10 until March 31, 2011. The event is open to the public. For further information contact curator Karen Druker 650-941-8073 or 650-941-7222.



Los Altos/ Los Altos Hills Senior COMMITTEE

The new Joint Senior Committee is comprised of six members from Los Altos and three members from Los Altos Hills: Diane Brauch, Catherine Long Popell, and Al Traficanti, with Ginger Summit as the Council Liaison. The Committee Chair is Karen Jenney and Vice Chair is K. Gabrielle Tiemann of Los Altos.

The mission of the joint Los Altos/Los Altos Hills (LA/LAH) Senior Committee is to promote and enhance the quality of life and well-being of adults and senior citizens in both communities.

The Senior Committee meets the first Monday of every month at 4:30 pm in room 11 at the Hillview Community Center, 97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos CA 94022.

LOS ALTOS HILLS Hoedown

The Westwind Community Barn, 27210 Altamont Road, is the location for the Los Altos Hills Annual Hoedown, which will take place Saturday, September 11 from 3:00 – 8:00 pm. The Hoedown will feature live music, arts and crafts, Farmers Market, BBQ and free entertainment for the entire family. The 2nd Annual Community Farmers Market provides an opportunity for residents to set up a table to sell their locally grown fruits and vegetables.

The event will also highlight textile demonstrations, quilting, knitting, crocheting, spinning, weaving, soap-making, leather-tooling, puppet-making, and family-oriented games and prizes. At 4:30 pm residents can view Equestrian exhibitions in the upper arena featuring the 4-H riders, Parks and Recreation participants from the Year 'Round Riding Program, as well as the Pacific Ridge Pony Club. This year, California Barbecue will be selling meals onsite for \$10 each. The 4-H, Youth Commission and Pony Club will be hosting a bake sale. Wine from J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines will be poured.

If you would like to participate in our Farmers Market, host a craft table or game, pour wine, or donate to the event, please contact Sarah Gualtieri, sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov or 650-947-2518.



This fall and winter Parks & Recreation is offering these classes for adults and seniors:

- **Pilates** by Kathy Klein begins 9/29
- **Tai Chi – Wu Style Tai Chi Chuan** by Mark Hindelang begins 1/5
- **Stepping Strong** by Lifelong Fitness Alliance begins 9/23
- **Plein Air Painting** with Robert Schick begins 9/18
- **Life Stories** with Sheila Dunec begins 9/15
- **Current Events Discussion Group** with Ben Medved begins 10/1
- **Bridge Club** with Prudence Saunders begins 10/1

To register, visit www.losaltoshills.ca.gov or call Parks & Recreation at 650-941-7222.

Talking 'Bout My Generation :)

The Los Altos Hills Youth Commission has been busy — volunteering at the Town Picnic and hosting their first event, Sunday Night Live, in June at Hidden Villa.

In August they held a meet-and-greet with the Los Altos Youth Commission and are currently planning an event for this fall. To raise funds, the group will be selling popcorn and caramel apples at the Hoedown.

The Commission reports to the Community Relations Committee and currently has nine members. To learn more about becoming a member, please contact Community Services Coordinator, Sarah Gualtieri, at 650-947-2518, or sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov.



Public Education in LAH

The Los Altos Hills Education Committee remains busy and dedicated to preserving the wonderful public education options available to Town residents. Recent committee highlights include:

- Over recent months the committee expanded to 11 members.
- The committee was successful in getting improvements for the Los Altos Hills student drop off site on Miranda Avenue into the currently funded building projects for Gunn High School. This should be completed by the end of 2013.
- Superintendents from Los Altos School District (LASD) and Mountain View School District (MVLA) have met with the committee to discuss district parcel tax and bond issues.
- Committee members unanimously supported MVLA Measure A (also supported by the voters), and expect detailed discussion of a proposed LASD parcel tax, likely to appear on a spring ballot.

- The committee has completed an analysis of LAH student enrollment by district for years 2007-10 (with special thanks to Steve Hubbell for his efforts). Copies will soon be available on the Town website.

It should be noted that Los Altos Hills residents now contribute property and parcel tax revenue of over \$18,000 per LAH student per year to our local school districts (up to \$32,000 to MVLA), a per-student total substantially greater than that contributed to the districts by residents outside Los Altos Hills.

To learn more about public education in the Town or the committee, visit www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/city-government/standing-committees/education or attend one of the public meetings. Regular meetings are scheduled on the first Wednesday of every other month. The next meeting will be held on September 1 at 6:30 pm in council chambers.

Bart Carey, M.D., Chairman Education Committee



LAH COUNCIL ADDRESSES WATER CONSERVATION FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION



The LAH City Council, complying with the State mandate of AB 1881, passed a water-conserving landscape ordinance for new construction and major additions. Following Town-wide notifications, the proposed ordinance was heard by both the Planning Commission and City Council, and passed on July 15, 2010 by the City Council.

The ordinance achieved several goals. First, it is dramatically simpler to implement than the State Model Ordinance, requiring less detail in landscape plans and eliminating subsequent audits. Second, it is also mildly more water conservative than the State Model Ordinance, but still allows more water use than our average consumption.

Residential Water Usage

During 2009, the average water use for the 2,000 LAH residential customers supplied by Purissima Hills Water District was 409 units per household. (A unit of water is 100 cubic feet of water or 748 gallons.) About 200 customers used more than twice the average amount (i.e., more than 818 units annually) and 27 customers used more than four times the average. These “high water use” households as a group used 30% of the total water that PHWD supplied to all its residential customers in 2009. This means that about 10% of the District’s customers account for 30% of the water usage.

How Ordinance Impacts New Construction

For the typical level, one-acre residence, the new ordinance will allow 690 units of water per year. While many will say that this hardly sounds like water conservation, the State Model Ordinance would allow 833 units of water per year. So while it’s true that a new residence can use about 69% more water than the average residence, the new target is still 17% more conservative than the State Model Ordinance would require.

Everyone should make an effort to understand their annual water use for several reasons. First, having a better handle on the magnitude and details of your water use can lead to a greater commitment to water conservation. (For example, did you know that an estimated 10% of residential water usage is lost to leaks, which can frequently be detected by unexpected increases in your water bill?) Second, this knowledge can help each resident more efficiently utilize this increasingly scarce and expensive resource. Toward that end, the Water Conservation Committee will work with the local water districts to improve the quality of the information provided on residents’ water bills.

To take a more active part in water conservation in our community, consider attending a Water Conservation Committee meeting. This committee meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Parks & Recreation building.

A PERFECT DAY FOR A PICNIC



This year's Town Picnic, held at Purissima Park, drew another large crowd of almost 2000 Town residents. Our local firefighters prepared a delicious barbecue, while everyone enjoyed perfect summer weather and listened to the Jazz ConneXion band. The Classic Car Show featured many cars owned by Town residents. Other activities and attractions included a pirate show, face painting, jump houses, Lionel train display, and a motorized train ride, transporting families to the Classic Car Show and pony rides. The Town Picnic is organized each year by the Community Relations Committee, and has grown over the years into a signature event in Los Altos Hills. So many cheerful residents volunteered to help scoop ice cream, serve beverages, coordinate games, staff the registration table, and perform all the necessary tasks for a successful event. The Committee would like to express its appreciation to all of the wonderful volunteers, LAH Youth Commission, Town staff, and attendees that made this year's picnic such a wonderful and memorable community-building event. The Community Relations Committee meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at Town Hall at 7:30 pm. These meetings are open to the public, and all residents are invited to attend and get involved in the community.





TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS
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Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

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Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official Town newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the Town — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the Town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is October 17, 2010.**

Printed with soy-based inks. International Paper, the manufacturer of the paper, has earned Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forestry Stewardship Council dual certification.

www.losaltoshills.ca.gov

Our Town

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Los Altos Hills City Council

Breene Kerr, Mayor
Rich Larsen, Vice Mayor
Jean Mordo
Ginger Summit
Dean Warshawsky

CALENDAR

Sept 11

Sat., 3:00- 8:00 pm
Hoedown at Westwind Barn

Barn dance, good old-fashioned fun, food stands, dinner, music, dancing. Free event. Food can be purchased at the street fair. Contact Eric at 650-941-7222.

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Sunday, 2:00 – 5:00 pm
Art Show, Opening Reception

Laurie Barna presents a patriotic art exhibit: "The Liberty Ladies," 25 of a



series of 100 paintings. Music and all-American food will be featured. Exhibit runs from September 10 – March 2011. Open to the public. Info. Call Karen Druker at 650-941-8073 or 650-941-7222.



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Sat., 4:30 – 8:30 pm
14th Annual Josephine and Frank Duveneck Humanitarian Awards Dinner

Invitation to join Hidden Villa for their annual awards dinner and celebration. Hidden Villa will be honoring Susan, Franklin, Katherine, David & Katy Orr, Chris Bischof & Helen Kim, and Eboo Patel. Catering

is by Restaurant O and will feature food from from Hidden Villa's Farm. Tickets are \$250. Contact Marc Sidel at 650-949-8652.

October 12

Tuesday, 7-9 pm
Los Altos/Mountain View League of Women Voters Debate
Candidates for LAH City Council Debate; LAH Town Hall

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Friday, 6-8 pm
Preview Party for the 2010 LA/LAH Modern Home Tour
A Special Event to kick-off the "2010 LA/LAH Modern Home Tour" Contact: King Lear 650-949-5908 ext. 2 Ticket Info. www.neutra-house.org

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Saturday, 10 am -3 pm
2010 LA/LAH Modern Home Tour

Tour selected homes in Los Altos/ LAH of innovation and excellence of design. Contact: King Lear at 650-949-5908 ext. 2. Ticket Info. www.neutrahouse.org.

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Sunday, 3:00 pm
Halloween Pumpkin Carving

Los Altos Hills Families and Fremont Hills Country Club invites your family for an afternoon of games, activities and treats. For more information, visit www.lahfamily.com.



Nov 2

Tuesday
Election Day

Polls open 7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Town Hall will be open to receive vote-by-mail ballots from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.



Dec 5

Sunday, 1-4 pm
Westwind Community Barn Lighting
Santa and Refreshments Info. 650-941-7222

Calendar events are also posted on Town's website: www.losaltoshills.ca.gov